

## § 12.25

### § 12.25 Transfers in settlement of civil penalty claims.

In the discretion of the Solicitor, an owner of wildlife or plants who may be liable for civil penalty under the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*; Lacey Act, 18 U.S.C. 43; Lacey Act Amendments of 1981, 16 U.S.C. 3371 *et seq.*; Eagle Protection Act, 16 U.S.C. 668 *et seq.*; or Marine Mammal Protection Act, 16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*, may be given an opportunity to completely or partially settle the civil penalty claim by transferring to the United States all right, title, and interest in any wildlife or plants that are subject to forfeiture. Such transfer may be accomplished by the owner's execution and return of a U.S. Customs Form 4607 or a similar compromise transfer of property instrument provided by the Department.

[47 FR 56861, Dec. 21, 1982]

### Subpart D—Disposal of Forfeited or Abandoned Property

SOURCE: 47 FR 17525, Apr. 23, 1982, unless otherwise noted.

#### § 12.30 Purpose.

Upon forfeiture or abandonment of any property to the United States under this part the Director shall dispose of such property under the provisions of this subpart D.

#### § 12.31 Accountability.

All property forfeited or abandoned under this part must be accounted for in official records. These records must include the following information:

- (a) A description of the item.
- (b) The date and place of the item's seizure (if any) and forfeiture or abandonment.
- (c) The investigative case file number with which the item was associated.
- (d) The name of any person known to have or to have had an interest in the item.
- (e) The date, place, and manner of the item's initial disposal.
- (f) Name of the official responsible for the initial disposal.
- (g) Domestic value of the property.

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### § 12.32 Effect of prior illegality.

The effect of any prior illegality on a subsequent holder of any wildlife or plant disposed of or subject to disposal is terminated upon forfeiture or abandonment, but the prohibitions, restrictions, conditions, or requirements which apply to a particular species of wildlife or plant under the laws or regulations of the United States or any State, including any applicable conservation, health, quarantine, agricultural, or Customs laws or regulations remain in effect as to the conduct of such holder.

### § 12.33 Disposal.

(a) The Director shall dispose of any wildlife or plant forfeited or abandoned under the authority of this part, subject to the restrictions provided in this subpart, by one of the following means, unless the item is the subject of a petition for remission of forfeiture under § 12.24 of this part, or disposed of by court order:

- (1) Return to the wild;
- (2) Use by the Service or transfer to another government agency for official use;
- (3) Donation or loan;
- (4) Sale; or
- (5) Destruction.

In the exercise of the disposal authority, the Director ordinarily must dispose of any wildlife or plant in the order in which the disposal methods appear in this paragraph (a) of this section.

(b) The Director shall dispose of any other property forfeited or abandoned under the authority of this part (including vehicles, vessels, aircraft, cargo, guns, nets, traps, and other equipment), except wildlife or plants, in accordance with current Federal Property Management Regulations (41 CFR chapter 101) and Interior Property Management Regulations (41 CFR chapter 114), unless the item is the subject of a petition for remission of forfeiture under § 12.24 of this part, or disposed of by court order.

(c) The Director shall dispose of property according to the following schedule, unless the property is the subject of a petition for remission of forfeiture under § 12.24 of this part:

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(1) Any live wildlife or plant and any wildlife or plant that the Director determines is liable to perish, deteriorate, decay, waste, or greatly decrease in value by keeping, or that the expense of keeping is disproportionate to its value may be disposed of immediately after forfeiture or abandonment; and

(2) All other property may be disposed of no sooner than 60 days after forfeiture or abandonment.

(d) If the property is the subject of a petition for remission of forfeiture under § 12.24 of this part, the Director may not dispose of the property until the Solicitor or Attorney General makes a final decision not to grant relief.

### § 12.34 Return to the wild.

(a) Any live member of a native species of wildlife which is capable of surviving may be released to the wild in suitable habitat within the historical range of the species in the United States with the permission of the landowner, unless release poses an imminent danger to public health or safety.

(b) Any live member of a native species of plant which is capable of surviving may be transplanted in suitable habitat on Federal or other protected lands within the historical range of the species in the United States with the permission of the landowner.

(c) Any live member of an exotic species of wildlife (including injurious wildlife) or plant may not be returned to the wild in the U.S., but may be returned to one of the following countries for return to suitable habitat in accordance with the provisions of § 12.35 of this part if it is capable of surviving:

(1) The country of export (if known) after consultation with and at the expense of the country of export, or

(2) A country within the historic range of the species which is party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (TIAS 8249) after consultation with and at the expense of such country.

### § 12.35 Use by the Service or transfer to another government agency for official use.

(a) Wildlife and plants may be used by the Service or transferred to another government agency (including foreign agencies) for official use including, but not limited to, one or more of the following purposes:

(1) Training government officials to perform their official duties;

(2) Identifying protected wildlife or plants, including forensic identification or research;

(3) Educating the public concerning the conservation of wildlife or plants;

(4) Conducting law enforcement operations in performance of official duties;

(5) Enhancing the propagation or survival of a species or other scientific purposes;

(6) Presenting as evidence in a legal proceeding involving the wildlife or plant; or

(7) Returning to the wild in accordance with § 12.34 of this part.

(b) Each transfer and the terms of the transfer must be documented.

(c) The agency receiving the wildlife or plants may be required to bear all costs of care, storage, and transportation in connection with the transfer from the date of seizure to the date of delivery.

### § 12.36 Donation or loan.

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this section, wildlife and plants may be donated or loaned for scientific, educational, or public display purposes to any person who demonstrates the ability to provide adequate care and security for the item.

(b) Any donation or loan may be made only after execution of a transfer document between the Director and the donee/borrower, which is subject to the following conditions:

(1) The purpose for which the wildlife or plants are to be used must be stated on the transfer document;

(2) Any attempt by the donee/borrower to use the donation or loan for any other purpose except that stated on the transfer document entitles the Director to immediate repossession of the wildlife or plants;